

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the pending claims in light of the preceding amendment and the following discussion.

Applicant has amended the claims to indicate that the socket wrench has a hollow handle, and that the hollow handle carries a plurality of sockets. This incorporates the limitations of claims 4 and 5 into claim 1.

As currently amended, these claims would be rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, over the Zurbuchen et al. reference in view of the Peters reference. Applicant would maintain that the claimed invention is not obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of the cited references.

One applies a great deal of force when using a socket wrench. In fact, the purpose of the socket wrench is to provide mechanical advantage, or leverage, in rotating the socket and nut. Thus, it inherently requires a great deal of force which is applied to the wrench. Applicant has found that a hollow, tubular socket wrench can function and meet the strength requirements for a socket wrench even though the socket wrench is formed from a plastic material. By forming this product with a hollow handle, a solid neck and a ratchet mechanism in the head portion, one can meet the strength requirements and, at the same time, support the sockets in the hollow handle.

Although the Peters reference, which is invented by the current applicant, does show a hollow handle, this is a metallic structure. The actual commercial

embodiment is much heavier and bulkier than a typical socket wrench. It was not obvious that one could switch to a plastic material and provide the same functionality.

Further, one could not modify the Zurbuchen et al. reference due to the method of construction. This product is a compression molded product which uses layers of a glass fiber reinforced thermoset polymer matrix sheet molding compound. This is then compression molded to form the present invention. It could not be formed with a hollow interior. This would require significant mechanical changes and, perhaps, even grinding away the interior. If one were to grind away the interior, one could not guarantee the structural integrity of the hollow handle. Thus, there is no way to guarantee that such a modification would be successful.

In light of the above, Applicant would maintain that the currently claimed invention is unobvious in light of the cited references and, accordingly, would request allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

WOOD, HERRON & EVANS, L.L.P.

By 

Gregory J. Lunn, Reg. No. 29,945

2700 Carew Tower
441 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 241-2324 - Telephone
(513) 421-7269 - Facsimile